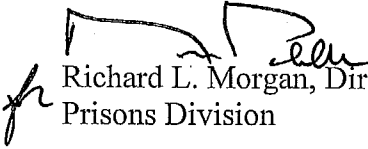




STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1100

October 8, 2009

TO: All Prison Staff

FROM:  Richard L. Morgan, Director
Prisons Division

SUBJECT: Update on Prison Closure Study

A week has passed since my last message to you and I hoped by now I would be able to share with you details about the information contained in the prison closure study. Unfortunately, we have not seen a draft of the study. According to the Office of Financial Management, the draft of the study will be available soon.

When it does become available, it would be my desire to be the first to send the draft to you. In reality, I think that is unlikely. You may well see or hear of it first from some other source, and I want to make sure you know that parts of communicating the draft are not likely to be controllable by DOC.

More importantly, at the risk of overstating it, everyone should understand that any recommendation to reduce our capacity by 1,580 beds is bound to be dramatic and will, understandably, create a lot of concern and discussion. Keep in mind this is a "draft," with a final recommendation due about one month later. Then, there will be several months of processing through the Legislature. Nothing is certain until then.

Another point that I want to clear up is that the study is not the reason for bed closures. We have known for some time that because of a reduced inmate forecast and the state's budget challenges we must reduce the number of beds in our system. It is not the consultant's decision. It's not the department's choice. It's an absolute necessity in order to meet the state's budget challenges. With or without the study, we will have to bring the Division in line with our budget and our capacity constraints.

During an economic crisis, we cannot operate our facilities at anything less than 100 % capacity. The state cannot afford to keep beds on line when the inmate population is not there to fulfill them. We will operate and manage our prison capacity according to the number and type of offenders in our system, and we will do it safely.

"Working Together for SAFE Communities"

Weekly Prison Closure Study
October 8, 2009
Page 2

To update you on where we are at with the out-of-state inmates, we will continue to return them to our prisons. We are on target to return all of them before the end of the calendar year.

As with any major department change, the rumor mill is bound to start turning. Although there is no place for rumors in a professional work environment, it is my experience that no amount of effort will prevent them. Take them with a grain of salt and dismiss them for what they are. If they unnerve you, feel free to pass them on to me and I'll do what I can to address them in my weekly updates. If there is validity to a story that is circulating, I will make sure that it is officially confirmed.

I would also be remiss if I didn't include a few of the other reductions we have already taken that were omitted in last week's message. These include a closure of one tower at Monroe Correctional Complex, a reduction to the K-9 Units, reductions to reentry positions at facilities with a reentry point and reductions to community work crews. I apologize for not including them in my previous memo.

RM:bds

cc: Eldon Vail, Secretary
Executive Staff